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## **The Significance of Southeast Asia (the *Jawah* World) for Global Islamic Studies: Historical and Comparative Perspectives**

**Azyumardi Azra, CBE\***

Geographically, the Muslim area in Southeast Asia, also conveniently called the Malay-Indonesian world, is situated on the periphery of the Islamic world. Furthermore, the area also represents one of the least Arabized parts of the Islamic world. Despite these facts, however, developments of Islam in Southeast Asia are inseparable from those in the Arab world. Therefore, since the introduction of Islam into Southeast Asia, developments of Islam in the Middle East have continually affected the course of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world. Within this context, it was a sort of international scholarly network, centered in the Haramayn (Makkah and Madinah), which played a crucial role in incessantly sending the renewal impulses from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries onwards to such areas of the Muslim world as the Malay-Indonesian world.

There has been a tendency among scholars to exclude Southeast Asian Islam in any discussion on Islam. This kind of treatment is largely based on an assumption that the area has no single stable core of Islamic tradition to serve as a dominant focal point, in relation to which scholars can find some points of orientation. Furthermore, the evidences that survive for the arrival and developments of Islam, by and large, are considered fragmented among a large number of languages and cultural traditions. The combination of these factors has, until recent times, placed the study of Southeast Asian Islam out of the mainstream of Islamic studies. Recent works on Southeast Asian Islam, together with the fact that area now contains the most populous Muslim country (Indonesia) in the world, have brought a new impetus to the study of the nature of the relationship between Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian Islam.

A strong link between Southeast Asian Muslims and their Middle Eastern counterparts has existed since the very early time of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world. The contacts among Southeast Asia and the Arab world even in the pre-Islamic period took place through the way of trade. Since the early times of Islam, wandering Sufi teachers and traders from the Arab world frequented the harbor-cities of Southeast Asia, and engaged in the introduction of Islam to the native population.

The increasing prosperity of the Muslim states in the Malay world due to the rise of lucrative trade in commodities such as gold, pepper and other spices, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, pushed their very contacts even further. However, further penetration of Islam was carried out mostly by wandering Sufi teachers from the Middle East and South Asia

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who were attracted by the prosperity of the Muslim courts in this region. As a rule, they came and lived under the patronage of the Sultans. The latter provided for them not only peaceful and convenient shelters as well as a good deal of material reward, but also crucial facilities which enabled them to carry out their mission to improve Islamic life among the population.<sup>1</sup>

More importantly, the prosperity of the Southeast Asian Muslim states provided a great deal of opportunity for the Muslim population in this area to go to the centers of Islam in the Arab world. Most of them, of course, went to the Hijâz or more precisely the Haramayn to make the *hâjj*——the fifth pillar of Islam. But there were also those who stayed there and studied various Islamic sciences for some time. This led to the rise of what the Meccans and Medinese called the “Jâwî” (or ‘*Jawah*’) community in the Holy Land. The term “Ashâb al-Jâwîyyîn,” of course, literally refers to the Javanese people, but more than that it has come to signify all Malay-Indonesian people<sup>2</sup> regardless of their original places or ethnic origins. Thus, the Javanese, Sumatrans, from the Malay peninsula and even the Patani of South Thailand were all called the “Jâwî.” The phenomena of the Jâwî community in the Middle East have been recorded by some scholars. Mustafa al-Hamâwî (d.1171/1757), a pupil of Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, one of the main characters of this paper, in his biographical dictionary, *Fawâ'id al-Irtihâl wa natâ'ij al-Safar*,<sup>3</sup> compiled in the eleventh/seventeenth century, provides us with the earliest yet known Arabic reference to the Jâwî students in Medina. Two centuries later, Snouck Hurgronje also described vividly the lives of the Jâwî students and their community in Mecca.<sup>4</sup>

Considering the extensive economic, diplomatic and socio-religious relations between the Muslim Malay-Indonesian and the Arab countries —— it is apparent that the Jâwî students had pursued Islamic learning before the seventeenth century in various places along the trade and *hâjj* routes in the Middle East. Fortunately we have more than sketchy and fragmentary information concerning this. The Arab materials make it possible to reconstruct the early history of the Jâwî students in the Arab World. The manuscripts and *tarjamah* (biographical dictionaries) as a *genre* of Arabic sources from the fifteenth century onwards provide complex pictures of various networks which articulate not only the nature of religious and intellectual

1 On the presence of scholars from the Arab world in the courts of the Malay-Indonesian states during the early days of Islam in Southeast Asia, see, B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, part 2, The Hague and Bandung, 1957, pp. 237–67; HJ. de Graaf and TH. G. TH. Pigeaud, *De eerste Moslimse vorstendommen op Java: studien over de staatkundige geschiedenis van de 15e en 16de eeuw*, KITLV, Verhandelingen 69, The Hague, 1974; RO. Winstedt, “Early Muhammadan Missionaries,” *JSBRAS*, 81 (1920).

2 Ibn Battûta in the 14th century also used the term, “Jâwâ” to signify the whole Malay archipelago. See, Ibn Battûta, *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325–1354*, London, 1983, pp. 271–6, 367.

3 For biographies of Mustafa ibn Fath Allâh al-Hamâwî, see, Muhammad Khalîl al-Murâdî, *Silk al-Durar fî a'yân al-qarn al-thânî 'ashar* (henceforth *Silk al-Durar*), Baghdad, 1302/1883-4, vol. 3-4, p. 178; ‘Abd al-Rahmân al-Jabartî, *‘Ajâ'ib al-âthâr fî al-tarâjim wa al-akhbar* (henceforth *‘Ajâ'ib al-âthâr*), ed. Hasan Muhammad *et. al.*, Cairo, 1957–8, vol. 1, p. 181. A copy of the *Fawâ'id al-Irtihâl* is available as Ms. Dâr al-Kutub, Cairo, tarîkh 1093, folio 166–7.

4 Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century*, Leiden, 1970, pp. 215–92.

relationships among the Arab and Southeast Asian Muslims but also reflected developments of Islam in the region, and thus present a clearer picture of socio-intellectual history of Malay-Indonesian Islam.

Some other records such as Western, Persian, and Chinese from the fifteenth century onwards are also an important source of knowledge. They, however, present a picture of Islam as an economic and political rival and offer little about Islam with a religious face, representing the extension of a world community. To discover this dimension, it is necessary to turn from the political and the economic faces of Islam, those encountered by its political and economic enemies, towards the intellectual and spiritual products of Muslim life and civilization. To do this, one must seek the lines of intellectual tradition exemplified in the study and pursuit of Islamic learning—either inside or outside of the Southeast Asian region—and attempt to see their distribution among and influence upon the various focal points of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world. Unless this is done, it is not possible to isolate the criss-crossing networks of lines of tradition and lines of authority which stimulate and maintain the pulse of Islamic belief and social life in this area.

A clearer picture of the lines of intellectual tradition in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Malay-Indonesian world is provided by the networks of Ahmad al-Qushâsî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, then the leading “*ulamâ*” in the Haramayn, and their students. There are at least two branches of networks of the above “*ulamâ*” in the Malay-Indonesian world; the first of which came down through ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf al-Sinkilî of Aceh and Shaykh Muhammad Yûsuf al-Makassari of Sulawesi (formerly Celebes) in the seventeenth century, and the second through Abû al-Tahir ibn Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, Muhammad Hayyâ al-Sindî of India originally and Muhammad ‘Abd al-Karîm al-Sammânî down to the latter of Jâwî students such as ‘Abd al-Samad al-Palimbali, Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, and Daud ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Patani in the eighteenth century.

The main purpose of this paper is to present the intellectual and religious networks of the Arab and Southeast Asian ‘*ulamâ*’, precisely that of Ahmad al-Qushâsî, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf al-Sinkilî, Shaykh Yûsuf al-Makassari and their students in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This discussion is confined to the first branch of this network; we do not include in this discussion the second branch of the network, that is, that of Abû al-Tahir, Muhammad Hayyâ al-Sindî, ‘Abd al-Karîm al-Sammânî and their Jâwî disciples, i.e. al-Palimbani, al-Banjari, and al-Patani.

This paper is also aimed at assessing the impacts of those networks upon the Islamic renewal movements in the Malay-Indonesian world which gained their momentum since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By concentrating upon these themes, hopefully we will have a better grasp of the development of Islam in Southeast Asia. As we will see, though the area is situated on the periphery of the Islamic world, it constantly receives various impulses

—— mainly through the networks of the ‘*ulamâ*’ —— from the centers of Islam in the Arab world which to a great degree influence the dynamic of Southeast Asian Islam. Therefore this study of the ‘*ulama*’ networks has a great significance for global Islamic studies.

### **The International Networks of ‘*Ulamâ*’**

The spiritual situation of Islam in the late medieval period can be said to be broadly characterized by the tension between so-called orthodox Islam and Sûfism. From the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries onward there emerged among the *tarîqas* a new doctrine largely opposed to the spirit of orthodox Islam. The contrast, not only with orthodox Islam but even with early Sûfî practices, is remarkable. Whereas during the first three centuries seekers of the Sûfî path displayed a striking independence of spirit, resourcefulness and creativity, later on a rigorous discipline was imposed and an absolutely unquestioning submission to the spiritual dictatorship of the Shaykh or the master was emphasized. And whereas in the 3rd/9th century Junayd al-Baghdâdî, for instance, taught that a seeker should behave, *vis-à-vis God*, as a puppet, it was now said that he should be in the hands of his preceptor as a “dead body in the hands of its washers.”<sup>5</sup>

In the meantime, however, efforts had already begun in the 3rd/9th century within the Sûfî circles, like those of al-Kharrâz and Junayd, to bridge the gulf between orthodox Islam and Sûfism and to keep the latter within reasonable limits. A powerful instrument in this whole *rapprochement* were the new *ahâdith* put into circulation throughout the 3rd/9th century and 4th/10th centuries with the double purpose of promoting the cause of Sûfism and bringing it into the orthodox fold. In the last quarter of the 4th/10th century a number of men such as al-Sarrâj (d. 377/987) and al-Kalâbâdhî (d. 385/995) through their writings pleaded the cause of a moderate Sûfism with a structure of ideas consistent with and even lending support to orthodoxy. This movement culminated in the monumental life-work of al-Ghazâlî (d. 505/1111) who proved to be its genuine cornerstone. He succeeded in achieving a synthesis between Sûfism and *kalâm* which was largely adopted by orthodoxy and confirmed by *ijmâ’*. The strength of the synthesis lay in the fact that it gave a spiritual basis for the moral practical *elan* of Islam and thus brought it back to its original religious dimensions. Al-Ghazâlî, therefore, not only reconstituted orthodox Islam, making Sûfism an integral part of it, but was also a great reformer of Sûfism, purifying it of un-Islamic elements and putting it at the service of orthodox religion.

It is clear that after the Sûfî movement had captured the Muslim world during the 6th/12th and 7th/13th centuries, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually, among the ‘*ulamâ*’ —— even the pure *muhaddithûn* (traditionists) —— there was a growing awareness that they found it almost impossible to neglect the Sûfî forces entirely. Now, instead of refuting it, they

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5 Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, Second Edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. 137.

tried to incorporate as much of the Sûfî legacy as could be reconciled with orthodox Islam and could be made to yield a positive contribution towards it. The moral motive of Sûfism was emphasized and some of its techniques of *dhikr* or *murâqaba*, “spiritual concentration” were also adopted. But the object and the content of this concentration were identified with the orthodox doctrine and the goal re-defined as the strengthening of faith in dogmatic tenets and the moral purity of the spirit. This type of neo- Sûfism, as Fazlur Rahman calls it, tended to generate orthodox activism and re-inculcate a positive attitude to this world.<sup>6</sup> Henceforth, often a great ‘*ulamâ*’ and a great Sûfî were one and the same person. The enrollment of the ‘*ulamâ*’ in the Sûfî movement resulted in continual emphasizing and renewal of the original moral factor and puritanical self-control in it, especially at the expense of the extravagant features of popular ecstatic Sûfism. This was the spiritual situation of Islam when, beginning in 11th/17th century, a sense of anxiety and urgency of religio-social moral reform gripped the greater part of the Muslim world, expressing itself in different areas in reform movements and schools which exhibited a fundamentally similar character.

It is apparent that scholar communities, particularly that centered in Makkah and Madinah played a crucial role in the above-mentioned developments. Due to the central role of these Holy Cities in the religious life of the Muslims, it is not surprising that both cities increasingly became the crucial focal points and meeting places of ‘*ulamâ*’ from all over the Muslim world. Since the early 11th/17th century, changing patterns of communication and exchange made a significant increase in the interaction in the Holy Cities among scholars possible. The growing presence of European trade shipping and naval power, especially in the Indian Ocean, made travel between the Indian Ocean region and the Hijâz more direct and convenient.<sup>7</sup> Similar increases in commercial activities also increased travel facilities within the Mediterranean Basin. As a result, more ‘*ulamâ*’ were able to get together more frequently from the widely scattered parts of the Islamic world. Thus, a cosmopolitan network of the ‘*ulamâ*’ emerged out of the Haramayn.

The core of such a network were the popular and influential ‘*ulamâ*’ of Makkah and Madinah, either the natives or those from other parts of Islamic world who had resided permanently there. In other words, the members of this network, either teachers or students, had birthplaces and areas of early study ranging from the Hijâz to Persia, to India and Indonesia and to Egypt and Morocco. The group as a whole were widely traveled and very few among them received their full education in just one or two places. The increased cosmopolitanism in the international network of ‘*ulamâ*’, for sure, helped knowledge seekers,

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6 *Ibid.* p. 195.

7 For an interesting account of the growing European trade shipping and naval presence in the Indian Ocean since the early seventeenth century, for instance, see, Willem Floor, “The Iranian Navy in the Gulf during the Eighteenth Century,” *Iranian Studies*, 20, No. 1 (1987), pp. 31–53. Cf. Auguste Toussant, *History of the Indian Ocean*, Chicago, the University of Chicago Press, 1967, esp. pp. 118–44.

like our Jâwî students, to widen their intellectual horizon. Such a network helped to bring together a number of different zones of information and different traditions of study. It provided students with a wider ranging education. Furthermore, in addition to studying with their main teachers, as a rule, the students also took advantage of their contacts with scholars coming to the Holy Cities on pilgrimage.

Further analysis of the intellectual community reveals an even more interesting picture. It appears that this group was not defined by *tarîqa* membership or *madhhab* affiliation. However, it does seem that this group have some relationship to the legal schools. As Voll suggests, the core of this group is Shâfi'î, with a solid leaven of Mâlikî scholarship.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the community represents the continuation of the strong trend towards the renewed emphasis on the various Islamic disciplines, particularly *hadîth* studies. In accordance with the trends mentioned earlier, beginning in the late 10th/16th century there were efforts among the '*ulamâ*' in the Haramayn and Egypt to go beyond the six standard collections of the *hadîth* and the later medieval manuals based on them. More than simply preserving, explaining and reorganizing the materials found in these collections, more and more '*ulamâ*' showed an increasing interest in searching new *ahâdîth*, examining and putting them into use. Thus, there was a gradual shift of the emphasis in *hadîth* studies; now most '*ulamâ*' studied *hadîth* more for practical purposes than for academic reasons. The *hadîth* studies were now utilized more and more to provide a standard for judging current practices among Muslims.<sup>9</sup>

Again, such developments in *hadîth* studies were clearly related to the intention to reform Sûfism. *Hadîth* studies were viewed as a discipline supporting attempts at the socio-moral reconstruction of Muslim society, and thus had a scripturalist tone. In the international community of '*ulamâ*' under discussion, for many of those who developed a commitment to the socio-moral reconstruction of society, the content of thought that they shared came out of their *hadîth* studies; the model used for the ideal society was the community described by *hadîth*. Furthermore, *hadîth* studies provided strong linkages among the '*ulamâ*'. In addition, sûfi *turûq* gave them more personal ties and a common set of affiliations that helped to give the informal groupings of '*ulamâ*' a greater sense of cohesion. Even among the reformist *muhaddithûn* in the Haramayn and their students, *turûq* affiliation was almost always an important part of their self-identification.

To sum up, the network consisted of international '*ulamâ*' who had a variety of contacts with each other, sharing educational experiences. The picture that emerges from the patterns of relationship is one of a relatively closely intertwined intellectual community. There is no evidence to show that this network was in any way formally organized. However, it seems

8 John O. Voll, "Muḥammad Ḥayyā al-Sindī and Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb: An Analysis of an Intellectual Group in Eighteenth Century Madīna," *BSOAS*, 38 (1975), p. 35.

9 John O. Voll, "Hadith Scholars and Tariqahs: An Ulama Group in the Eighteenth Century Haramayn and their Impact in the Islamic World," *JAS*, 15, 3-4 (1980), pp. 264-7.

safe to assume that these ‘*ulamâ*’ shared at least some basic common views and either knew each other personally or were well-known to each other by reputation. The lines of connection can also be traced through the chains of student-teacher relations. However, the ideal of the socio-moral reconstruction of society and the enthusiasm imparted by the teachers within the network are more important in linking them together in this sort of revivalist network than the uniformity of their doctrinal positions. In general, the scholars in the network of instruction, had the knowledge and experience that inspired their students to assume the active mission of socio-moral reconstruction.

### **Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî**

As far as our investigation of the network goes, it seems that both Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî were dominant figures in the scholarly network in seventeenth century Makkah and Madinah. This can be seen not only in their high degree of scholarship but more importantly in their extensive relationship with other prominent ‘*ulamâ*’ and students coming from various parts of the Islamic world who in turn were involved in developing the spirit of Islamic renewal in their homelands. For these reasons it is appropriate to briefly describe the biographies of Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî and their personal and intellectual relations to their students, especially the Jâwî students.

Al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Yûnus ibn Ahmad ibn al-Sayyid ‘Alâ’ al-Dîn al-Madanî al-Qushâshî was born in Madinah in 991/1538. His father, Muhammad Yûnus, was a native of Diyana, a village near Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), who moved to Madinah for unclear reasons.<sup>10</sup> According Shâh Walî Allâh, a prominent Indian reformist who studied in Madinah with Abû Tâhir ibn Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî (1081–1145/1670–1732), Shaykh Muhammad Yûnus was a recluse and an outstanding sûfî. In order to retain his anonymity in Madinah, he sold *qushâsh* or used wares such as old shoes, used clothing, and so on.<sup>11</sup> It is for this reason his son got the nickname al-Qushâshî. In 1011/1602 Ahmad al-Qushâshî traveled with his father to Yemen, where he studied with various of the ‘*ulamâ*’, especially those with whom his father had studied. Later, he returned to Makkah and Madinah where he continued his studies with several great ‘*ulamâ*’ and *awliyâ*’ (Sufî saints), such as Ahmad ibn ‘Alî al-Shinnâwî — whose daughter he married — and Sibghât Allâh. Ahmad al-Shinnâwî later also appointed him as one of the *khalîfas* of the Shattariyya Sûfî order.<sup>12</sup> Although Ahmad al-Qushâshî lived

10 The biography of Ahmad al-Qushâshî is mainly supplied by Muhammad Amin al-Muhibbi, *Khulâsat al-athar fî a’yân al-qarn al-hâdî ashhar*, Cairo, 1284/1867–8, Vol. 1, pp. 343–6; Shâh Walî Allâh Dihlawî, *Anfâs al-‘arifîn*, Delhi, 1315/1897, pp. 178–80; AH. Johns, “Al-Qushâshî, Safî al-Dîn Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Muhammad Yûnus al-Madanî al-Dadjani,” *EP*, Vol. 5, 1986, pp. 525.

11 Walî Allâh, *Anfâs al-‘arifîn*, pp. 178–9. For further analysis on Ahmad al-Qushâshî’s relationship with Indian Muslim scholars, see, AA. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, Vol. 2, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publ. Pvt. Ltd., 1983, pp.330-1.

12 The Shattariyya is a Sufi order, which is essentially a branch of the Bistamiyya, one of the oldest of all



in Madinah, he regularly visited Makkah on pilgrimage. Free of the stern, sour personality so often associated with *fuqahâ'* he was, unlike many ascetics, a friendly and warm individual. Although he himself never visited the wealthy, if they called on him they were always politely received. He, however, never failed to remind such visitors to follow the lawful and reject the unlawful. He died on 19 Zuhijja, 1071/15 August, 1661.<sup>13</sup>

Ahmad al-Qushâshî won a great fame for his erudition and humility; therefore, he attracted students from such various countries as the Hijâz, Yemen, the Maghrib (North Africa), India, and Indonesia. He combined the *Sharî'a* and *tasawwuf* in his scholarship. He was very well-versed in the sciences of *hadîth* and *tafsîr* (the interpretation of the Qur'ân) and, at the same time, was very learned in *tasawwuf*. While in terms of the *sharî'a* schools of law he subscribed to the Mâlikî doctrines, in *tasawwuf* he was affiliated to several *turuq* (sing. *tarîqa* - Sûfî order), including the Naqshbandiyya, the Qâdiriyya, and the Shattariyya. Undoubtedly he was influenced by the doctrines of the school of Ibn 'Arabî, particularly as reformulated by 'Abd al-Karîm al-Jîlî. He, however, sought to reconcile the doctrine of *wahda al-wujûd* (the unity of Being) with the *Sharî'a* by emphasizing the importance of the fulfillment of the *sharî'a* doctrines in the Sûfî practices. Given this kind of scholarship, it is not surprising that his works, ranging from 12 as mentioned by Brockelmann<sup>14</sup> to about 50, mainly deal with the *hadîth*, *usûl al-fiqh* (the principles of Islamic jurisprudence), and *tasawwuf*. As described by al-Muhibbî, Ahmad al-Qushâshî appointed Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî as his *khalîfa al-rûhanî* that is, his successor in his *tasawwuf*, precisely as the Shaykh of the Shattariyya *tarîqa*.

There is a difference between al-Murâdî and al-Jabartî concerning the ethnic origin and the place of birth of Mullâ Ibrâhîm ibn Hasan Shâhranî al-Madanî al-Kûrânî (1023–1101/1615–90). Al-Murâdî in his biographical dictionary tells us that Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî was a Kurd, born in Shahrazur in the mountains of Kurdistân on the frontiers of Persia.<sup>15</sup> On the contrary, al-Jabartî points out that he was a Persian, born in Tehran.<sup>16</sup> Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî studied in various places in Persia, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt before settling in Madinah. His teachers in Madinah, among others, were Ahmad al-Qushâshî, Ahmad ibn 'Alî al-Shinnâwî,

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the *turuq*. The Shattariyya drew inspiration from many books on mystic exegesis and on divination ascribed to Imam Ja far al-Sadiq, the sixth Shi'i imam (d. 148/765). It was also influenced by stories about the life of Abu Yazid Bistami (d. circa 261/874). The principal exponent of the *silsila* was Abu Yazid al-Ishq of Transoxania. In the Ottoman Turkey, the order was known as the Bistamiyya, and in Iran and Transoxania it was called the Ishqiyya. For more information on the origins and doctrines of the Shattariyya, see, AA. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Agra, 1965, pp. 62–4; *A History of Sufism*, Vol. 2, *Op Cit.*, pp. 97–9; "Shattariyyah," in Gibb and Kramers (eds), *Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1974, pp. 533–4.

13 Walî Allâh, *Anfâs al-'ârîfîn*, *Op Cit.*, pp. 179–80.

14 Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte de Arabischen Litteratur*, Leiden, 1953–9, Vol. 2, pp. 514–5.

15 Al-Murâdî, *Silk al-Durar*, I, *Op Cit.*, p.5.

16 Al-Jabartî, *Ajâ'ib al-âthâr*, I, *Op Cit.*, p. 171.

Mullâ Muhammad Sharîf ibn Yûsuf al-Kûrânî and ‘Abd al-Karîm ibn Abî Bakr al-Husaynî al-Kûrânî. While in Damascus he studied with Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-‘Aramî; in Egypt with Azâyim Sultân ibn Ahmad al-Marakhî and Muhammad ibn ‘Alâ’ al-Dîn al-Bâbilî. The latter was a great *muhaddith*, who also had a wide ‘*ulamâ*’ network; he met with ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf al-Sinkilî several times, as we will describe later. In one of his works, *Masâlik al-Abrâr ilâ hadîth al-Nabî al-Mukhtâr*, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî tells us that he also studied for a period of three months in 1087/1667 with Shaykh Nûr al-Dîn ‘Alî ibn ‘Alî al-Shabrâmallisî, an Imâm of the Azhar.<sup>17</sup>

Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî was a great scholar; al-Jabartî calls him *Shaykh al-Shuyûkh* or Shaykh of the Shaykhs.<sup>18</sup> He was well-versed in the various Islamic disciplines and wrote numerous works mainly on *fiqh*, *tawhîd* (the science of the Oneness of God), and *tasawwuf*. Because of his erudition he taught at the Masjid al-Nabâwî in Madinah, and students from various Muslim lands flocked around him. Both in his *halqas* (study-circles) and in his writings, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî — as Ahmad al-Qushâshî did — emphasized the compatibility of *tasawwuf* and *kalâm* (theology) with the *sharî‘a*. In his opinion all these branches of Islamic disciplines were essentially ways to achieve a true understanding of *tawhîd* (the Oneness of God). He was the last great exponent of the school of Ibn ‘Arabî and, therefore, tried to explain and defend it, particularly in terms of al-Jîlî’s interpretation. He was a conciliator, though. To him, it was preferable to reconcile two opposing points of view than to choose one of them or the other. Perhaps in this context we can easily understand why he, like his master Ahmad al-Qushâshî, became a member of several *turuq*, the most important among them being the Naqshbandiyya and the Shattariyya.

Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî was a great ‘*âlim* with a distinct intellect and character. As a sûfî and a thinker, he espoused not only extreme devotion and inner spiritual understanding, but also an intellectual understanding of God and His role as Creator, and the relation of the Creator to creation. His view was clearly not that of al-Ash‘arî, who in his concern to maintain the omnipotence of God and His continually exercised creative power, and to rebut the hellenizing tendencies of the *mutakallimûn* (theologians), saw the world as a series of atoms individually re-created. Johns suggests that Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî and the school of Ibn ‘Arabî took a more dynamic view, and saw the concept of the *wahda al-wujûd* and a mystical interpretation of the Qur’ân as a means to a better understanding of the nature of God, and as leading to a spiritually deeper life.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, *Masâlik al-Abrâr ilâ hadîth al-nabî al-mukhtâr*, Ms. Dâr al-Kutub, Cairo, Tal‘at, 55-6ff quoted in AH. Johns, “al-Kûrânî, Ibrâhîm b. al-Shahrazûrî al-Hasan Sharani, al-Madanî,” *EF*, Vol. 5, 1986, p. 432.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Jabartî, *Ajâ‘ib al-âthâr*, Loc Cit. George Makdisi translates the word “shaykh” as “professor.” See, his *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1981, esp. pp. 188-93.

<sup>19</sup> AH. Johns, “Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections and New Directions,” *Indonesia*, 19 (1975), p. 49.

Yet, the complete thought of Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî is still far from being clarified. Most of his works have not been recovered and published. The number of works attributed to him ranges from forty-two as noted by Brockelmann<sup>20</sup> to over a hundred; only two of which have been published.<sup>21</sup> More importantly, for our purpose here, one of his unpublished works, the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî bi Sharh al-Tuhfa al-Mursala ilâ al-Nabî*<sup>22</sup> was written after repeated requests made to him over the years by his Jâwî students for a commentary upon *al-Tuhfa al-Mursala ilâ Rûh al-Nabî*, a *tasawwuf* book written by the Indian author, Muhammad ibn Fadl Allâh al-Burhânpurî (d. 1619).<sup>23</sup> According to Drewes, the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî* was written on the orders of Ahmad al-Qushâshî in order to imbue a correct understanding of al-Burhânpurî's work.<sup>24</sup> If this is correct, since Ahmad al-Qushâshî died in 1661, the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî* must have been written before then, although how long before cannot be ascertained.

Whether or not the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî* was written on the orders of Ahmad al-Qushâshî, it is important to keep in mind that al-Murâdî points out that Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî indeed wrote the answers to what he calls *al-Masâ'il al-Jâwîyya* (the Malay-Indonesian matters),<sup>25</sup> and the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî* was among his answers in the book form. Al-Hamâwî in his accounts relates that Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî told him that one (very likely it was 'Abd al-Ra'ûf) of his Jâwî companions informed him that the *Tuhfa al-Mursala* was popular and famous in the land of the Jâwî, and that it was read in their religious schools, and that youth studied it as a minor treatise on the rudiments of their studies.<sup>26</sup> Again, in the introduction to the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî*, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî confirmed that he wrote the book as a response to the questions put forward by one of his Jâwî companions. Unfortunately, he did not mention by name who that Jâwî was, but since 'Abd al-Ra'ûf was very close to him, we may safely assume that the Jâwî was 'Abd al-Ra'ûf. This Jâwî companion told him that some books of the *haqîqa* (realities) and other esoteric

20 Brockelmann, *Op Cit.*, pp. 505–6.

21 *EP*, Vol. 5, p. 433. Those two works are: Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, *al-Umam li iqâz al-himam*, Haydarabad, 1328/1910; A. Guillaume, "Al-Lum'at al-saniya fî tahqiq al-ilqâ' fî'l-umniya by Ibrahim al-Kurâni," *BSOAS*, 10 (1957), pp. 291–303.

22 A Critical edition of this work is now under preparation by AH. Johns and Nagah Mahmoud al-Ghoneimy. Brockelmann lists two manuscripts of the *Ithaf al-Dhaki*: one in the India Office, of which Snouch Hurgronje had a copy made for the Leiden University Library, and one in Berlin which has been lost. Recently, Johns and al-Ghoneimy discovered in Cairo three previously unknown copies of the work, all far superior to the Indian Office manuscript and of which the best located in the library of al-Azhar University. See, AH. Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Problems of Perspective" in CD. Cowan and OW. Wolters (eds.), *Southeast Asian History and Historiography*, Ithaca, Cornell. University Press, 1976, p. 317.

23 See a critical edition of this work by AH. Johns, *The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet*, Canberra, The Australian National University, 1965. According to Johns, the text is one of the most important single documents in history of the development of Sufi thought in the Malay-Indonesian world. All of the three famous scholars in the Malay-Indonesian world——Sham al-Din al-Sumatrani, Nur al-Din al-Raniri and Abd al-Rauf——made use of the *Tuhfa al-Mursala* in their writings and all used the system of seven grades of being (*martabat tujuh*) as proposed by the text.

24 GWJ. Drewes, *Bijdragen*, 115, part 3, p. 283.

25 Al-Murâdî, *Silk al-Durar*, *Op Cit.*, p. 6.

26 Al-Hamâwî, *Fawa'id al-Irtihal*, *Op Cit.*

teachings have spread among the inhabitants of the land of Jâwî, and the best known among them was the *Tuhfa al-Mursala*. This made problems among the Jâwî get worse. One of the most important problems was that the Jâwî population in general lacked understanding of the *sharî'a* before reading that book and entering the esoteric path. This led many of them to deviate from the right path and given rise to faulty belief, even unbelief and heresy.<sup>27</sup>

The above episode tells us clearly that both Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî had special relationship with their Jâwî students. They apparently shared the deep concern of their Jâwî students for their fellow Muslims back in the Malay-Indonesian world. Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî in particular, by writing the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî*, obviously devoted himself to the special needs of the Jâwî and their intellectual formation as well to keeping them from going astray as a result of their following of the esoteric path. In the *Ithâf al-Dhâkî*, it seems that Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî has brought all learning together in a supreme effort to plead the cause of the *wahda al-wujûd*, showing himself a master of Qur'ânic exegesis, of Tradition, of Arabic grammar, of scholastic theology, of mysticism and of philosophy.<sup>28</sup> In the last section of the work, he discusses lengthy citations from Ibn Sînâ's *al-Shifâ* and *al-Ishârât wa al-Tanbîhât*. His purpose is to show that, throughout Islamic history, all the Islamic disciplines may be used to demonstrate that the *wahda al-wujûd* is a metaphysical concept that violates none of the principles of revelation. Finally he puts forward convincing arguments for the justification of legal obligation in the Sûfî path to those who claim that the following of the *tarîqa* brings exemption from the provisions of the *sharî'a*. To him, the obligations such as the five daily prayers, the fast of Ramadan and the various other ritual and legal obligations should be performed by the ones who aspire to achieve true enlightenment.<sup>29</sup> With this discussion, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî emphasizes the importance of combining Sûfism with the *sharî'a* to the Malays.

### Shaykh Yûsuf And 'Abd al-Ra'ûf

We do not know the exact number of the Jâwî students who ever studied with both Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrahim al-Kûrânî. So far, at least, we do have documentation on two of the best known among them: Muhammad Yûsuf of South Celebes (Sulawesi) and 'Abd al-Ra'ûf of Aceh. We will now deal with these two Malay-Indonesian scholars.

Muhammad Yûsuf Tâj al-Khalwâti al-Maqâssarî, known by the Makassar (local people of South Sulawesi) as *Tuanta Samalata* (Our Gracious Master), was born in 1036/1626, and was probably a relative of the princely Goa Family. It is said that around 1644 he left his homeland for Mecca. Local accounts tell us that he had stopped on his way in Banten, and

<sup>27</sup> Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, *Ithâf al-Dhâkî*, cited in Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections" *Op Cit.*, pp. 51-2.

<sup>28</sup> Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Problems," *Op Cit.*, p. 317.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

also in Aceh in order to study with the famous Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî.<sup>30</sup> It is not clear whether or not he met Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî in Aceh, since the latter had left for his homeland in Gujarat, India in 1644 without ever returning to Aceh. If they did not meet in Aceh they must have met in Gujarat, since our sources indicate that Yûsuf did study with Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî; the latter even initiated the former into the Qâdiriyya Sûfî order.<sup>31</sup> It appears that it was also Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî, who introduced Shaykh Yûsuf to his own teacher, Sayyîd Abû Hafs ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd Allâh Bâ Shaybân, who lived mainly in Bijapur, India. Shaykh Yûsuf then also studied with Bâ Shaybân for sometime before he continued his travels to Yemen, where he studied with two Naqshbandiyya masters. He then went to Mecca and Medina, where he performed the pilgrimage; later he decided to stay and then studied, among others, with Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, who also initiated him into the Shattariyya Sûfî order.<sup>32</sup> After several years in the Haramayn, Yûsuf continued his studies in Damaskus, where he was also initiated to the Khalwatiyya order, and, therefore received the title of Tâj al-Khalwâtî.<sup>33</sup>

Muhammad Yûsuf wandered for at least 22 years in his quest for Islamic learning. His experience in pursuing various of the Islamic disciplines obviously reflects the complexity of the international ‘*ulamâ*’ network described earlier. Three of his main teachers — Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî, Bâ Shaybân, and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî — were among the representatives of the trends towards renewed orthodoxy described earlier, and he was clearly influenced by their teaching and ideas. It is not surprising that he became one of the most important channels of diffusion of the renewal movement brought from the Middle East to the seventeenth century Malay world. Thus, when Yûsuf returned from the Middle East to South Sulawesi around 1677, he immediately launched his renewal movement aimed at purifying Islam from pagan remnants and other un-Islamic beliefs and practices. Through his teachings and written works, Yûsuf disseminated the idea of a purer or a more *Sharî‘a*-oriented Islam.

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30 The celebrated Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî was a Gujarati scholar of Arab/Yemeni origin who arrived in Aceh in 1637 and died in Rânîr, his hometown, in 1666. He won fame through his position at the court of Iskandar Thâni, the Sultan of Aceh (1636–1641). He vehemently criticized the alleged pantheism of Hamzah and Shams al-Dîn al-Sumatrânî — two other famous Acehnese scholars. Al-Rânîrî’s position in the court enabled him to lead the persecution of those accused of heresy, and to have the books of Hamzah Fansûri burned. For accounts on al-Rânîrî, see Syed Naguib al-Attas, *Rânîrî and the Wujûdiyyah of Seventeenth Century Aceh*, Singapore, Monographs of the Malaysian Branch of Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS), 1966; CAO. Van Nieuwenhujze, *Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî*; Voorhoeve, *Twee Maleise geschriften van Nuruddin ar-Raniri*, Leiden, 1955; GWJ. Drewes, “Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî *Hujjat Siddîq li daf’i al-zindîq* re-examined.” *JMBRAS*, XLVII, 2 (1974), pp. 83–104; Ahmad Daudy, “Allah dan Manusia dalam Konsepsi Syekh Nuruddin ar-Raniri,” Unpubl. PhD diss., IAIN Jakarta, 1981. On Hamzah Fansûri, see, *JMBRAS*, XL, 1 (1974), pp. 42–51; J. Doorenbos, “De geschriften van Hamzah Pansoeri,” Unpubl. PhD diss., Leiden, 1933. On Shams al-Dîn Al Samatrânî, see, CAO. Van Nieuwenhujze, *Samsu’l-Dîn van Pasai*, Leiden, 1948.

31 Al-Attas, Rânîrî, *Op Cit.*, pp. 13–4; Rizvi, *A History of Sufism*, Vol. 2, *Op Cit.*, pp. 336; Affandi, *Tokoh-tokoh*, *Op Cit.*, p. 101.

32 GWJ. Drewes, “Indonesia: Mysticism and Activism,” in Gustave E. Von Grunebaum (ed.), *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1955, p. 291; Affandi, *Tokoh-tokoh*, *Loc. Cit.*

33 Mattulada, *Islam di Sulawesi Selatan*, *Op Cit.*, pp. 37–8.

His purification movement, however met strong opposition from the nobility who were concerned that the movement would certainly disrupt the established order. As a consequence, Yûsuf, who did not have sufficient power to challenge the nobility, left Makassar and settled in Banten, West Java, where he married one of the daughters of the Bantenese Sultanate. He gained such great esteem in this Sultanate, that he became what the Dutch sources call “the most influential high priest” of the Banten Sultanate.<sup>34</sup> The Sultan of the Banten appointed him not only as the mufti but also as the Viceroy. In his latter capacity, Yûsuf was assigned to visit various Muslim countries in the Middle East, particularly Syria and the Ottoman Sultanate, in order to strengthen their relationships. It is recorded that he went to visit the Ottoman Sultan in Istanbul in 1675.

Although Yûsuf had established himself as a high official of the Bantenese Sultanate, he still went back and forth to Makassar to ensure that the seeds of the more *sharī‘a*-oriented Islam he had sown continued to grow. Later, he took a leading role in the Bantenese resistance to the penetration of Dutch rule into Banten; but he was caught and exiled, first to Ceylon, where he devoted his life to teaching the local Muslim population and the Malay pilgrims who stopped on that island on their way to the Holy land. The Dutch who worried about his continued influence upon the Malay pilgrims soon transferred him farther away to South Africa, where he died in 1111/1699. In 1705 his mortal remains were brought back to Makassar after Sultan ‘Abd al-Jalīl of Goa insisted upon the Dutch doing so.

The most famous among the Jāwī students of Ahmad al-Qushāshī and Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī was of course ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf ibn ‘Alī al-Jāwī al-Fansûrī al-Sinkilī (1024–1105/1615–1693). He was born at Singkel, north of Fansûr, on the west coast of Aceh. We do not know much about his childhood. What is clear is that he arrived in the Arab world around 1640, and studied in various places there until the death of Ahmad al-Qushāshī in 1661, when he returned to Aceh. He gained the patronage of the Acehnese Sultāna, Safyât al-Dīn (1641–1675), who also appointed him as the *mufti* of the Sultanate of Aceh. ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf remained in his homeland until his death.<sup>35</sup>

At the end of one of his works, the *‘Umdat al-Muhtājīn*, ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf provides a brief summary of his experience in pursuing Islamic learning. It seems to be customary for scholars of the time to provide such information in order to prove their bona fides as religious teachers. Thus, in the colophon to the *‘Umdat al-Muhtājīn*<sup>36</sup> he lists various places in Arabia where he studied and the people from whom he studied. He narrates that he studied at half a dozen

34 Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, *Op Cit.*, p. 242; Affandi, *Tokoh-tokoh*, *Op Cit.*, pp. 101–3

35 DA. Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef van Singkel: Bijdrage tot de kennis van de mystiek op Sumatra en Java*, Heerenveen, Hepkema, 1909, pp. 25–6; AH. Johns, “Al-Sinkilī, ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf b. ‘Alī al-Djāwī al-Fansûrī,” *EF*, Vol. 1, 1960, pp.88

36 Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef*, *Op Cit.*, pp. 25–31. A copy of this work is in the possession of Leiden University, Ms. Cod. Or. 1933. His biographical notes on pp. 141–51 of the *‘Umdat al-Muhtājīn*.

places in Yemen, scattered along the pilgrimage route from Aden to Makkah, including Zabîd, Mukha, Tâyy, Bayt al-Faqîh and Mawza'. Then he traversed Arabia and studied at Dukha on the Qatar peninsula. Later, he again went westwards, studied in Jeddah, Makkah and finally in Madinah.<sup>37</sup> We should consider the hardship of such travel for a man from a very different region of the world bearing in mind the various modes of accommodation in different regions, especially in such places as Mawza', Zabîd, Mukha and Bayt al-Faqîh, a place which Freya Stark in 1942 described as a crumbled edifice of learning.

'Abd al-Ra'ûf studied a wide range of the Islamic disciplines, from what he calls the "exterior" (*zâhir*) sciences, such as Arabic grammar, Qur'ânic recitation, *hadîth*, and *sharî'a* to the "interior" (*bâtin*) sciences concerning *tasawwuf* (Sûfism). He indicates that he studied those exterior sciences mainly in Yemen. He writes, for instance, that he studied the art of Qur'ânic recitation in Zabîd with Shaykh 'Abd Allâh al-Adânî, whom he claims was the best "reciter" in Yemen. He narrates further that he spent the longest period of time studying the exterior sciences with Shaykh Ibrâhîm ibn 'Abd Allâh Ja'man at Bayt al-Faqîh and Mawza'. It was Shaykh Ibrâhîm Ja'man who introduced him to Ahmad al-Qushâshî, whom Shaykh Ibrâhîm Ja'man regarded as the pole of his era. He then studied *tasawwuf* and other branches of the Islamic disciplines with Ahmad al-Qushâshî and with his prominent disciple, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî.

An interesting picture emerges from 'Abd al-Ra'ûf's complex web of relationships during the course of his studies in the Arab world. In addition to studying with his main teachers mentioned above, he also took advantage of his contacts with other prominent scholars with whom he got acquainted both in Yemen and the Haramayn. He did not necessarily study in a formal sense with these scholars, but his contacts with them in one way or another enriched his world-view of Islam. Among his acquaintances were the scholars from Egypt, India and other Muslim areas; but the most important scholars, whom he met several times during their pilgrimages were Muhammad al-Bâbilî (1000–1077/1592–1666) of Egypt and Muhammad al-Barzanjî (1040–1103/1630–1691) of Anatolia.<sup>38</sup> Muhammad al-Bâbilî, then the leading Egyptian *muhaddith*, was the teacher of almost all major *muhaddithûn* in the Haramayn at the time, while Muhammad al-Barzanjî was a famous Sûfî master. Together with Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî, they constituted the core of the international network of '*ulamâ*' in the seventeenth century Islamic world. With respect to all the teachers and acquaintances he had, it is obvious that 'Abd al-Ra'ûf, like Shaykh Yûsuf, was included in the broad cosmopolitan group of '*ulamâ*' centered in Mecca and Medina as described earlier.

37 For further analysis of 'Abd al-Ra'ûf's teachers, see, Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef*, *Op Cit.*, pp. 27–31. Using other sources, Schrieke provides the same information, see, Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, *Op Cit.*, p. 247.

38 Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef*, *Op Cit.*, p. 29. For a biography of Muhammad al-Bâbilî, see al-Muhibbî, *Khulasat al-âthâr*, vol. 4, *Op Cit.*, pp. 39–42. For information on Muhammad al-Barzanjî, see, al-Murâdî, *Silk al-Durar*, Vol. 4, *Op Cit.*, pp. 65–6.

‘Abd al-Ra’ûf won great esteem from his teachers, especially Ahmad al-Qushâshî and Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî. The former appointed him as a *khalîfa* of the Shattariyya in order to propagate the order in his homeland.<sup>39</sup> After ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf returned to Aceh, Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî continued to correspond with him, giving advice and answering questions across the Indian Ocean. In his homeland, ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf gained an extra-ordinary reputation for learning and sanctity. His fame was not confined to Aceh but spread to many parts of the Malay-Indonesian world. After his death, the people venerated him as one of the most prominent reformers of Islam in the region. Thousands still visit his grave on a bank of the river (*kuala*), from which he derives his honorific epithet “Teungku di Kuala.”<sup>40</sup>

‘Abd al-Ra’ûf was a prolific writer; various of his works are extant and some of them are still used by Muslims in Southeast Asia. Voorhoeve lists twelve of them.<sup>41</sup> ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf wrote both in Arabic and Malay. His writings mainly deal with matters of fiqh, *ibada*, and *tasawwuf*. All of his writings in Malay are oriented to Malay-Indonesian conditions and set at a level appropriate for his students.<sup>42</sup> The bent of his mind was practical, and he had the concern of a religious teacher for his pupils. Thus, his works are always based on a concern for them; to enable them to understand Islam better, to protect them from dangers, and to warn them against intolerance. All of his writings are eager to present to their readers the basic minimum of Islamic belief and practices. As far as his writing on *tasawwuf* is concerned, he wanted to make it clear that it is obligatory for the Sûffis to follow the path of the *sharî’a*.

Considering his writings, scholars of Southeast Asian Islam are of the opinion that ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf — together with Nûr al-Dîn al-Rânîrî — was one of the most important representatives of orthodoxy in the Malay-Indonesian world. On the other hand, Hamzah Fansûrî and Shams al-Dîn al-Samatranî are considered heterodox sùffis on the grounds of their alleged pantheism. Furthermore, it appears that ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf seems to be well aware of the danger of the metaphysical concepts of *tasawwuf* for the *’awwâm*, the common populace. In his view, such metaphysical concepts could lead the *’awwâm* to deviate from the right track

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39 See the *silsila* of the Shattariyya from the Prophet Muhammad to ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf in Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef, Op Cit.*, p.48

40 HJ. De Graaf, “South-East Asian Islam to the Eighteenth Century,” in PM. Holt, AKS. Lambton and B. Lewis (eds), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 142.

41 Voorhoeve, “Bayân Tadjaliû: Gegevens voor een nadere studies over Abdoerraoef van Singkel,” *TKI*, LXXXV, No. 1 (1952), pp. 108–16; Cf. Sir Richard Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 147–8. His most important works are ‘*Umdat al-Muhtâjîn ila sulûk maslak al-Mufradîn*, *Majmû al-masâ’il*, *al-Mawâiz al Badiyah*, *Tarjamun al-Mustafid* (tafsir), *Mir’at al-Tullab* (fiqh), *Daqâ’iq al-Huruf* (tasawwuf), and *Bayân Tajalli* (tasawwuf).

42 See an article on his *tafsir*, “Tarjamun al-Mustafid yang tetap Up-to-date,” *Panji Masyarakat*, No. 588, September 1988, pp. 76–7; AH. Johns, “Islam in the Malay World: An Explanatory Survey with some Reference to Qur’anic Exegesis,” in Raphael Israeli and Anthony Johns (eds), *Islam in Asia: Volume II Southeast Asia and East Asia*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1984, pp. 140–161; Peter Riddell, “‘Abd al-Ra’ûf al-Sinkilî’s Tarjamun al-Mustafid: A Critical Analysis of His Treatment of Jûz 16,” Unpubl. PhD diss., the Australian National University, Canberra, 1984.



of Islam as formulated in the *sharī'a*. In this respect he agreed with al-Ghazālī's opinion that *tasawwuf* may be taught to the *khāwas* (elite) only.<sup>43</sup> In later developments, however, his *tasawwuf* could not be confined to the *khāwas*; it inevitably penetrated the *'awwām* as well.

### The Extended Network of Scholars

It is clear that both Muhammad Yūsuf al-Makāssarī and 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī brought about the same spirit of Islamic renewal to the Malay-Indonesian world. Though they studied with the same teachers in the Holy Land,<sup>44</sup> they did not necessarily follow the same method in spreading the idea of reformism. As we have seen earlier, Yūsuf tended to be more radical than 'Abd al-Ra'ūf. The latter was gentler and more tolerant; he was a mirror image of the kindness of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī. In cases of disagreement with any doctrine, he explained himself by quoting the tradition: "Let no Muslim call another Muslim an unbeliever. If he does so, and it is true, what is there to be gained by it? And if it is not true, the accusation is turned back upon him."<sup>45</sup> Apart from their differences in temperament and methods in spreading a new perception of Islam, both Shaykh Yūsuf and 'Abd al-Ra'ūf were very important linking figures who connected the international network of scholars to a more regional level of scholars. They helped to attract and recruit young scholars to the cause of the socio-moral reconstruction of Muslim society. It is not just ideas and doctrines that are important. It is also personal contacts. The nature of transmission of Islamic disciplines before the modern times which depended much on personal contacts greatly helped to strengthen the ties of teachers and disciples. Similarly, *tarīqa* affiliation involves face-to-face contact in explicitly personal networks. All these provide a personalized type of network that appears to be a very effective means of recruitment. They do provide the interpersonal bonds that made the network of revivalist scholars an effective recruitment instrument for the cause of Islamic renewal.

It is within this kind of framework 'Abd al-Ra'ūf became a prominent figure in the extended network of international '*ulamā*' referred to earlier. It was not long before he was able to become an important linking figure in the international network by attracting and recruiting many young and talented disciples from various parts of the Malay-Indonesian world. Through his disciples, not only did he introduced a more *sharī'a*-oriented Islam to this region, but almost single-handedly, he also initiated many disciples into the Shattariyya, Naqshbandiyya, Qādiriyya, and Chistiyya orders in the area.<sup>46</sup>

One of 'Abd al-Ra'ūf disciples who was held responsible for spreading a new vigor

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43 "Tarjumān al-Mustafid," *Loc Cit.*

44 For an account of the learning together of Shaykh Yūsuf and 'Abd al-Ra'ūf in the Haramayn, see Hamka, *Antara Fakta dan Khayal Tuanku Rao*, Jakarta, 1974, pp. 177–8.

45 Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections," *Op Cit.*, p. 53.

46 See, chain of authorities in Arabic Ms. In the National Museum Jakarta, DCLCI, ff. 172a–104b.

of Islam in Java was ‘Abd al-Muhyî. After studying for sometime with ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf in Aceh, ‘Abd al-Muhyî returned to his village in West Java and established the Shattariyya, which soon spread to Central and East Java.<sup>47</sup> The rapid spread of this Sûfî order was greatly helped by the increase of information on Islam as a result of the growing contacts between the Sultanate of Banten in particular with the Arab world beginning in the first half of the seventeenth century. During the latter part of the century, Banten or West Java as a whole was reputed to be a center of Islamic orthodoxy, where religious scholarship and a religious way of life were highly esteemed. Given this kind of situation, it is not surprising that the Shattariyya also soon gained momentum. It rapidly won the upper hand over the alleged pantheistic Sûfism of Hamzah Fansûrî, who once came to Banten to introduce his doctrines.

A similar network also developed between ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf with his Sumatranese disciples. Some of his students, whom he cannot identify by name, also brought the Shattariyya to Bengkulu, Southwest Sumatra. The Shattariyya in this area later on led to the rise of a Qushâshîyya order which, as one might expect, claimed Ahmad al-Qushâshî as its founder.<sup>48</sup>

Another famous disciple of ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf was Burhân al-Dîn of Ulakan, West Sumatra. Together with four other West Sumatranese students, Burhân al-Dîn studied with ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf for some time<sup>49</sup> and toward the end of the seventeenth century he returned to Ulakan, his home village. Having been appointed by ‘Abd al-Ra’ûf as a *khalîfa* of the Shattariyya, Burhân al-Dîn, better known as the Tuanku Ulakan, soon established his *surau*,<sup>50</sup> which proved to be the most effective tool for the spread of the Shattariyya throughout the region. During the life-time of Shaykh Burhân al-Dîn, his *surau* came to be regarded as the sole authority in religious matters in Minangkabau; he himself was viewed as the “leader in this world and the hereafter of all beings in this part of the region.”<sup>51</sup> Until the rise of the Padri

47 The *silsila* of the Shattariyya in Java and its branches in other parts of the Archipelago can be found in Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef, Op Cit.*, pp. 95–8; Sir Richard Winstedt, *The Malays: A Cultural History*, New York, Philosophical Library, 1950. p. 35. For a complete biography of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muhyî, see, DA Rinkes, “De Maqam van Sjech ‘Abdoelmoehyi,” *TBG*, LII (1910), pp. 556–89

48 Rinkes, *Abdoerraoef, Op Cit.*, p. 97.

49 Hamka, *Antara Fakta, Op Cit.*, p. 149. This work also discusses the biography of Shaykh Burhan al-Dîn, see, pp. 128–57. Cf. Hamka, *Ajahku: Riwayat Perjuangan Kaum Agama di Sumatera*, Djakarta, Djajamurni, 1957, pp.23–6.

There is a treatise written by Shaykh Burhan al-Dîn and ‘Abd al-Ra’uf. The treatise describes the coming of Islam into Ulakan and other areas of Minangkabau, the doctrine of the Shattariyya. The treatise is edited and published by Ph. Van Ronkel under the title, “Heit Heigdom te Oelakan,” *TBG*, 56 (1914), pp.281–316.

50 The *surau* is the typical traditional Islamic educational institution in West Sumatra. It functions in the same way as, for instance, the *Zawiya* in the Arab world. It is a Sûfî center as well as a center for the teaching of various of the Islamic disciplines. For a more complete discussion on the *surau*, see, Azyumardi Azra, “The Rise and Decline of the Minangkabau Surau: A Traditional Islamic Educational Institution in West Sumatra during the Dutch Colonial Government,” Unpubl. MA Thesis, Columbia University, 1988.

51 JJ. Hollander (ed.), *Sjech Djilal-Eddin: Verhaal van de aanvang der Padri-onlusten op Sumatra*, Leiden, 1857, p. 6. This is one of two accounts we possess written by the Minangkabau who took part in the Islamic reform movements, beginning in the last decades of the seventeenth century. In this account, Faqîh Saghir Tuanku Samî‘ Shaykh Jalâl al-Dîn Ahmad describes the coming of Islam into Minangkabau, the early

movement,<sup>52</sup> it was still an anathema to the religious teachers in Minangkabau to question the religious authority of Ulakan. Furthermore, the Ulakan *surau* became not only the major point of departure for the complete Islamization of West Sumatra, but also produced learned disciples such as Tuanku Nan Tua who became the prominent leader of the next wave of the Islamic renewal movement in Minangkabau toward the end of the seventeenth century.

## Conclusion

We have been trying to show that Southeast Asian Islam was not a separate entity in the Muslim world. Though Muslims in this area are geographically far away from Mecca and Medina, they have in fact continually received impulses from the centers of Islam in the Arab world which have influenced the developments of Islam in Southeast Asia. The most crucial link between Islam in the Arab world and Southeast Asian Islam in the seventeenth century was the international network of '*ulamā*', centered in the Haramayn. Consisting of '*ulamā*' from various parts of the Muslim world, this network proved to one of the most important training grounds for the Jâwî students who from the early seventeenth century onwards increasingly came to the Arab world to pursue various of the Islamic disciplines. Through this network, the Jâwî students received not only various branches of Islamic learning, but also the renewed spirit of Islamic renewal. Given this fact, it is not surprising that when they returned to the Malay-Indonesian world, these Jâwî students became the prominent figures in the Islamic renewal movements in Southeast Asia.

With respect to Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world, the seventeenth century was a crucial stage in its development. After the mass-conversion in the previous centuries, it was only after the second half of the seventeenth century we observe the rise of Islamic renewal movements which brought about some kind of purification of Islam from the remnants of Hindu-Buddhist and animistic beliefs and practices. This renewal tendency continued down to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during which the European colonial powers increasingly penetrated the Malay-Indonesian world. In these later stages, the ever growing Western encroachment was also in part responsible for further crystallization of the Islamic renewal movements among the Muslim population.

This paper has dealt with one of the branches of the international network of '*ulamā*'

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reforms and the Padri movement.

52 The Padri movement (1804–1838) was a sort of continuation of the reform movement carried out by Tuanku Nan Tua, a prominent disciple of Shaykh Buthân al-Dîn. The peaceful movement turned radical after the return of the three hâjjees from the Holy Land in the beginning of the nineteenth century; it then resembled the Wahhâbî movement in many ways. As a consequence, the Padris created conflicts and wars among the Minangkabau; the Dutch interference later on resulted in the jihâd against the Dutch. For more discussion on the Padri movement, see, HA. Stein Parve, "De secte der Pidaries (Padries) in de Bovenlanden van Sumatra," *TBG*, ii (1855); Hollander, *Sjech Djilal-Eddin, Op Cit.*; Christine Dobbin, "Tuanku Imam Bonjol (1772–1864)," *Indonesia*, 13 (1972), pp. 5–35; *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847*, London, Curzon Press, 1983.

concerned. As one might expect, this branch of the scholarly network, proved to be the most important vehicle for the transmission of the renewal spirit of Islam from the Haramayn to the Malay-Indonesian world. With respect to the extended international network of scholars in the Malay-Indonesian world, further research is needed in order to better explicate the nature of transmission and diffusion of the new understanding of Islam. In this context, one should deal not only with the genealogy of the scholars in the network, but also with their intellectual posture as reflected in their works. It is only after studying their works that we may have a clearer picture of Islam in Southeast Asian and its relations to Islam in the Arab world and other Muslim areas.

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